



The International Wine & Food Society

Miami Branch

Season Opener Stag Event

Rendezvous in the Sky

September 16, 2009

Eroncig's Penthouse and The Gables Club

Dear IW&FS Member:

You are invited to our 299th event.

WHERE:

Jim & Bobi Eroncig's PH "K"
& The Gables Club Restaurant
10 Edgewater Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33133

WHEN:

Wednesday, September 16, 2009
Reception at 7:00 PM
Dinner at 8:00 PM

EVENT DESCRIPTION:

To kick off our new season, our very own long-standing member, Jim Eroncig, and his wife Bobi will open up their beautiful penthouse home at The Gables Club for a champagne reception where you also will enjoy a museum quality art collection and spectacular views of Coconut Grove and Coral Gables, as well as delectable canapés. Following the reception, we will move downstairs to The Gables Club Restaurant where you will enjoy a delicious 4-course dinner paired with some of those limited, special wines that we can only bring out for the smaller Stag Dinners. Taking note of the comments that we received in our recent Miami Branch Member Survey, we intend to limit this dinner to 35 Members (with a very limited number of guests being considered only if our Members don't take full advantage of this excellent evening of great food, wine and friends)! We also will be experimenting with a new way to cover the wine commentary-courtesy of Jim Eroncig's programming!



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The Gables Club

Jim & Bobi Eroncig's P.H. "K"

September 16, 2009

Report by Christopher Loller



Over the summer, the Board of Directors conducted a survey of our membership via the internet seeking input on a wide variety of issues, from food and costs, to timing and venues, in an attempt to create events with more appeal to the members. Our first event of the year was designed to satisfy many of the desires, and it sold out within 3 days.

Hosted in his own home by Jim Eroncig, we first had a cocktail reception in his 14th floor penthouse featuring fantastic views of Coral Gables, Coconut Grove, Miami and Biscayne Bay. We stepped off the private elevator and were greeted by a bevy of passed hors d'oeuvres created by Jim's daughter, Jamie. We feasted on her homemade

Shrimp Cocktail, more like baby langoustines they were so large and then wrapped them in bacon before baking them to a nice crisp. The combination of salt and creaminess, crispy bacon and sweet dates was delicious. Finally there were slices of Pork Tenderloin, set on a baguette and topped with Goat Cheese and Caramelized Onions: more terrific taste and texture sensations. The multi-talented Jamie should open her own business. Jim raided our cellar for a stellar accompaniment to these treats: the 1999 Perrier Jouet Brut. Another wonderful innovation that Jim insisted upon was to produce a menu that also gave us some tasting notes for each wine with each course. That way we could all make comments after reading the published press notes. It is an idea that really works! For those not there, the champagne had "... generous honeyed notes of apricots and flowers" with "plenty of length" and "pretty notes of sweetness" on the "lingering finish." Works for me!



For dinner, we took over half of the beautiful Gables Club Restaurant and Jim put maitre d' Michael and Chef Joe McDevitt to the IW&FS test. The seating policy was also designed, or I should say engineered, by Jim. We all randomly drew a number as we entered his apartment and that was to be our table assignment. This system worked beautifully. Two long, a





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round, and a short table were soon filled with convivial conversations.

The first course was a gorgeous presentation of a butterflied quail on a bed of Watercress and Bibb lettuce. The quail was grilled with a cherry glaze, and done to perfection: moist meat, tender legs and delicate wings. The light sherry dressing on the salad was a very good match for the tasty glaze, and neither overpowered the



delightful bird. From the excellent 2002 Burgundy vintage, Jim pulled the Vincent Girardin Clos de la Roche. According to Robert Parker, whose tasting notes were on the menu, this wine was at a stage where it could either soften and, thus, get a higher score, or it could harden, depending on the balance of fruit to firm tannins. With “candied black cherries, cassis, and roasted oak” on the nose, it was “armed with...depth and intensity of fruit before being overtaken by its firm tannins.” I saw good fruit and still firm tannin, some earthiness and leather; very much a product of its terroir. It went quite well with the quail.



Next came four large and delectable Porcini Mushroom Raviolis in a beautiful sauce of Buerre Rouge. The deep flavors of the mushrooms combined well with the rich red wine sauce, making for a



very hearty but still light dish. Simply delicious! For this plate full of large flavors, Jim chose two Italian wines from the much-heralded 1997 vintage in Tuscany. The Argiano Brunello di Montalcino was described as “... medium bodied” with “aromas of soy, stewed vegetables, old saddle leather, red currants and sour cherries....In the mouth high tannin kicks in, giving the wine a more attenuated feel.” To me, it was much better than that description gives credit. The wine was excellent, with full flavors of red fruits and strong acidity and smooth tannins. It was especially good next to the Castello Banfi Brunello di

Montalcino, described as “..internationally styled, dark ruby/garnet colored” with “straightforward aromas of sweet new oak, black cherries, and currant fruit...” and “...medium bodied and clean with a modest finish” in the mouth. It was also a delicious wine, but in my opinion it came in second in this side-by-side, but perhaps uneven, pairing. Nonetheless, an excellent opportunity to taste two wines from this famous vintage.

Jim brought out some big guns for our meat course. After a little wrestling with the menu,





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he settled on a rack of Lamb with fresh mint demi served with Yukon Gold Whipped Potatoes and green peas: a classic chance to show off some fine Bordeaux.

The lamb was beautiful, four lovely ribs per person and rosy red inside. Two incredible wines from the 1990 vintage were put to good use in another side-by-side comparison: The Chateau Margaux and the Chateau Canon (St. Emilion, not Canon Fronsac).

Parker has written volumes about these wines and I will try to paraphrase. He described the Margaux as a "...quintessential example of this Chateau." and "profoundly concentrated" and "ethereal bouquet of sweet black fruits, cedar, spiced flowers, smoke and vanilla" that was "remarkably well-formed and intense." With no "hard edge" in the mouth, it "is super concentrated, soft, silky-textured and opulent." In my notes I wrote "more fruit than tannin, big fruit, and finally opening after a lot of time." It was gorgeous! According to Parker, the Canon is "fully mature" with "a strong earthy, spicy, cedary, herbaceous character accompanied by sweet currants, plums and hints of dark cherries and cola." Its "mellowed tannins" let the wine exhibit "an attractive expansiveness." I found it to have an excellent balance between fruit and tannin, and a great representative of the Right Bank. Both of these were a real treat.



For our cheese course, Jim took another opportunity to be creative and think outside the box. He wanted to serve a white wine with the cheese, so he carefully chose to give us Camembert and Brie with Sliced Pear and Crackers. Soft cheese with white wine is often a recommended way to go, and it went great on this night. Back to the Burgundy producer Vincent Girardin, we went for his 2002 Corton Charlemagne. The menu notes read "a profound light to medium wine...

bursts from the glass with minerals, flowers, fresh herbs, and hints of mint... a pure, fleshy offering of outstanding depth, concentration, and power. Loads of sappy minerals...with spices and apples in its refined, noble character." I certainly concur, expect for the hint of mint. The wine had classic chardonnay characteristics of apple and mineral with great acidity to cut through the rich fatty cheeses. A great pairing and a super way to get us out on the patio for....



...BYO cigars

and 1970 Warre Vintage Port: a wonderful way to end a stag night, with an expansive patio and some lovely cigars. The port "has a unique mineral-scented character that gives it complexity and style that is quite impressive."

I think we all were incredibly impressed with Jim's hosting abilities and the fantastic venue, vittles, vinos, and friends. This was a super start to our 2009-2010 season.





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RECEPTION

- **SHRIMP COCKTAIL**
 - **STILTON STUFFED DATES WRAPPED IN BACON**
 - **PORK TENDERLOIN ON A BAGUETTE WITH GOAT CHEESE AND CARAMELIZED ONIONS**
- 1999 PERRIER JOUET BRUT**

WINE DESCRIPTION:
THE 1999 PERRIER JOUET BRUT IS SWEETER AND SOFTER THAN THE 2000, WITH GENEROUS HONEYED NOTES OF APRICOTS AND FLOWERS. THE WINE SHOWS PLENTY OF LENGTH, WITH PRETTY NOTES OF SWEETNESS THAT LINGER ON THE FINISH.

MENU

GRILLED CHERRY GLAZED QUAIL SERVED OVER WATERCRESS-BIBB SALAD WITH SHERRY DRESSING
2002 VINCENT GIRARDIN CLOS DE LA ROCHE

WINE DESCRIPTION:
CANDIED BLACK CHERRIES, CASSIS, AND ROASTED OAK SCENTS CAN BE FOUND IN THE NOSE OF THE MEDIUM TO FULL-BODIED 2002 CLOS DE LA ROCHE. ARMED WITH ADMIRABLE DEPTH AND INTENSITY OF FRUIT, THIS DELICIOUS WINE OFFERS LUSH LAYERS OF DARK FRUITS BEFORE BEING OVERTAKEN BY ITS FIRM TANNIC BACKBONE.

PORCINI MUSHROOM RAVIOLI WITH BEURRE ROUGE
1997 CASTELLO BANFI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

WINE DESCRIPTION:
THE INTERNATIONALLY-STYLED, DARK RUBY/GARNET-COLORED 1997 CASTELLO BANFI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO OFFERS STRAIGHTFORWARD AROMAS OF SWEET NEW OAK, BLACK CHERRIES, AND CURRANT FRUIT. IN THE MOUTH, IT IS MEDIUM-BODIED AND CLEAN WITH A MODEST FINISH. THE MEDIUM-BODIED 1997 ARGIANO BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO POSSESSES A DARK PLUM/GARNET COLOR WITH AROMAS OF SOY, STEWED VEGETABLES, OLD SADDLE LEATHER, RED CURRANTS, AND SOUR CHERRIES IN THE MODERATELY INTENSE NOSE. IN THE MOUTH, HIGH TANNIN KICKS IN, GIVING THE WINE A MORE ATTENUATED FEEL.

1997 ARGIANO BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

RACK OF LAMB WITH FRESH MINT DEMI SERVED WITH YUKON WHIPPED POTATOES AND GREEN PEAS
1990 CHATEAU MARGAUX

WINE DESCRIPTION:
THE 1990 MARGAUX CONTINUES TO BE THE QUINTESSENTIAL EXAMPLE OF THIS CHATEAU. IN ADDITION TO BEING PROFOUNDLY CONCENTRATED, ITS ETHEREAL BOUQUET OF SWEET BLACK FRUITS, CEDAR, SPICES, FLOWERS, SMOKE, AND VANILLA IS REMARKABLY WELL-FORMED AND INTENSE. IN THE MOUTH, THERE IS NOT A HARD EDGE TO THIS CLASSIC WINE, WHICH IS SUPER-CONCENTRATED, SOFT, SILKY-TEXTURED, AND OPULENT. THE FULLY MATURE 1990 CHATEAU CANON, A PREMIER GRAND CRU CLASSE FROM ST.-EMILION, REVEALS A STRONG EARTHY, SPICY, CEDARY, HERBACEOUS CHARACTER ACCOMPANIED BY SWEET CURRANTS, PLUMS, AND HINTS OF DARK CHERRIES AND COLA. THE TANNINS HAVE MELLOWED, AND THE WINE EXHIBITS AN ATTRACTIVE EXPANSIVENESS.

1990 CHATEAU CANON (ST. EMILION), CG

CAMEMBERT AND BRIE WITH SLICED PEAR AND CRACKERS
2002 VINCENT GIRARDIN CORTON CHARLEMAGNE

WINE DESCRIPTION:
A PROFOUND, LIGHT TO MEDIUM-BODIED WINE, THE 2002 CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE BURSTS FROM THE GLASS WITH MINERALS, FLOWERS, FRESH HERBS, AND HINTS OF MINT. IT IS A PURE, FLESHY OFFERING OF OUTSTANDING DEPTH, CONCENTRATION, AND POWER. LOADS OF SAPPY MINERALS ARE INTERMINGLED WITH SPICES AND APPLES IN ITS REFINED, NOBLE CHARACTER.

CIGARS (BYOC) AND PORT ON THE OUTSIDE PATIO
1970 WARRE VINTAGE PORT, DOURO

WINE DESCRIPTION:
THIS HOUSE MAKES RATHER RESTRAINED, YET RICH, FLAVORFUL VINTAGE PORTS. WHILE SLOW TO DEVELOP, THIS VINTAGE PORT HAS A UNIQUE MINERAL-SCENTED CHARACTER THAT GIVES IT COMPLEXITY AND STYLE THAT IS QUITE IMPRESSIVE.

HOSTS: JIM ERONCIG & BOB HUDSON

CHEF: JOE McDEVITT

299th Branch Event